

Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior version, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. A gastrointestinal sampling device comprising:

a malleable drag material for obtaining a gastrointestinal sample having a first portion and a second portion; and

a deployable protective sheath for deployment from a packed position to an extended position about said first portion of said malleable ~~the~~ drag material such that ~~the~~ said first portion of said malleable drag material is substantially enclosed by ~~the~~ said deployable protective sheath upon removal from the gastrointestinal tract, said second portion of said malleable drag material being exterior of said deployable protective sheath.
2. (currently amended) A The device according to claim 1, wherein said device is used for the diagnosis of certain gastrointestinal pathogens.
3. (currently amended) A The device according to claim 1, wherein said malleable drag material is selected from the group consisting of absorbent string, cotton, sampling cloth, wool, acrylic, nylon, plastic, chain links and finely woven metal or mixtures thereof.
4. (currently amended) A The device according to claim 3, wherein ~~the~~ said malleable drag material is 50% wool and 50% acrylic.
5. (currently amended) A The device according to claim 1, wherein ~~the~~ said malleable drag material is coated with a bacterial adherent.
6. (currently amended) A The device according to claim 5, wherein the bacterial adherent is poly-L-lysine.

7. (currently amended) A The device according to claim 1, wherein ~~the~~ said malleable drag material further comprises a pH indicator or urease indicator.
8. (currently amended) A The device according to claim 1, further comprising a capsule for carrying ~~the~~ said malleable drag material and said deployable protective sheath.
9. (currently amended) A The device according to claim 1, wherein ~~the~~ said deployable protective sheath is deployed about ~~the~~ said drag material by movement from ~~a retracted~~ said packed position to ~~an~~ said extended position.
10. (currently amended) A The device according to claim 9, wherein the ~~retracted~~ packed position of ~~the~~ said deployable protective sheath is held in place by edible glue.
11. (currently amended) A The device according to claim 9, wherein ~~the~~ said deployable protective sheath is assisted in deployment by the use of a spring device.
12. (currently amended) A The device according to claim 11, wherein ~~the~~ said spring device is a nylon line or a ~~teflon~~ polytetrafluoroethylene coated stainless steel thread.
13. (currently amended) A The device according to claim 11, wherein ~~the~~ said spring device is attached with adhesive to the inner surface of ~~the~~ said deployable protective sheath.
14. (currently amended) A The device according to claim 1, further comprising a non-absorbent filament wherein one end of the filament is attached to one end of the deployable protective sheath, with the other end of the filament attached to a weight so that upon deployment the weight assists in the extension of ~~the~~ said deployable protective sheath over ~~the~~ said first portion of said malleable drag material.
15. (currently amended) A The device according to claim 1, further comprising a rubber ring attached to ~~the~~ said deployable protective sheath, wherein said rubber ring is of a similar diameter to ~~the~~ said deployable protective sheath and said ring assists in the deployment of ~~the~~ said deployable protective sheath.
16. (currently amended) A The device according to claim 1, wherein ~~the~~ said malleable

drag material is folded within the capsule.

17. (currently amended) A The device according to claim 1, further comprising a weight for assisting with the extension of the said first portion of said malleable drag material in the stomach of a patient.

18. (currently amended) A The device according to claim 17, wherein the weight is a dissolvable weight.

19. (currently amended) A The device according to claim 8, wherein said capsule is constructed of a non-gelatine dissolvable material.

20. (currently amended) A The device according to claim 8, wherein the said capsule is no more than two centimeters in length.

21. (currently amended) A The device according to claim 8, wherein said capsule is no more than 0.9 centimeters in diameter.

22. (currently amended) A The device according to claim 8, wherein the said capsule is non-dissolvable and is composed of at least two parts joined together with water-soluble glue.

23. (currently amended) A method of gastrointestinal sampling comprising the steps of:

~~swallowing~~ allowing a gastrointestinal sampling device comprising a malleable drag material and deployable protective sheath;

allowing sufficient time for said drag material to obtain said gastrointestinal sample;

withdrawing said drag material such that on withdrawal said deployable protective sheath extends from a packed position to an extended position and encloses a portion of said drag material; and

recovering said gastrointestinal sample for testing.

24. (currently amended) A method of manufacturing a gastrointestinal sampling device comprising the step of encasing a first portion of a malleable drag material and

deployable protective sheath in a capsule, a second portion of said malleable drag material extending from an exterior of said capsule.

25. (new) The method of claim 23 further comprising the step of packing a first portion of said malleable drag material and said extensible protective sheath into a capsule, a second portion of said malleable drag material extending from an exterior of said capsule, said capsule breaking apart or dissolving and releasing said malleable drag material and said extensible protective sheath into a patient's stomach.